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Adapting to Pregnancy: Third Trimester

Although common during pregnancy, some discomforts may seem worse in the final weeks. Simple lifestyle changes can help. Take care of yourself. And ask your partner to help out with small tasks.

Limiting Leg Problems

- Wear support hose all day.
- Avoid snug shoes and clothes that bind, such as tight pants and socks with elastic tops.
- Sit with your feet and legs raised often.

Caring for Your Breasts

- Wash with plain water. Avoid using harsh soaps or rubbing alcohol. They may cause dryness.
- Wear a nursing bra for extra support. It can also hide any leaks from your nipples.

Controlling Hemorrhoids

- Eat foods that are high in fiber. Also, exercise and drink enough fluids. This will reduce constipation and hemorrhoids.
- Sleep and nap on your side. This limits pressure on the veins of the rectum.
- Try not to stand or sit for long periods.

Controlling Back Pain

As your body changes during pregnancy, your back must work in new ways. Back pain is due to many causes. Physical changes in your body can strain your back and its supporting muscles. Also, hormones (chemicals that carry messages throughout the body) increase during pregnancy. This can affect how the muscles and joints work together. All of these changes can lead to pain. Pain may occur in the upper or lower back. Pain is also common in the pelvis. Some pregnant women have sciatica, pain caused by pressure on the sciatic nerve running down the back of the leg. Ask your healthcare provider for specific tips and exercises to help control your back pain.

Tips to Help You Rest

Good rest and sleep will help you feel better. Here are some ideas:

- Ask your partner to massage your shoulders, neck, or back.
- Limit the errands you do each day.
- Lie down in the afternoon or after work for a few minutes.
- Take a warm bath before you go to sleep.
- Drink warm milk or teas without caffeine.
- Avoid coffee, black tea, and cola.



Stopping Heartburn

- Avoid spicy or acidic foods.
- Eat small amounts more often. Eat slowly.
- Wait 2 hours after eating before lying down.
- Sleep with your upper body raised 6 inches.